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The success of social legislation in New Zealand has been very moderate, but, on the other hand, it does not seem to have checked the material progress of the country, as may be seen from the fact that the value of the combined exports and imports for the year 1910 reached the enormous sum of £39,000,000, exceeding by £2,000,000 the record mark of 1907. This is a great volume of foreign trade for a country with scarcely 1,000,000 inhabitants, and shows clearly that a rich country can stand a good deal of social legislation without being brought anywhere near the brink of ruin.

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*L'Etat des Classes Agricoles en France à la Veille de la Révolution.*

By J. LOUTCHISKY. (Paris: Honoré Champion, Editeur. 1911. Pp. 108. 2 fr.)

Since 1894, Professor Loutchisky has been searching the departmental archives covering the period immediately preceding the Revolution—a task in which the archivists in charge have given expert assistance. The object of the research is the investigation of changes in land ownership and systems of land tenure, and the effect of these changes upon the products of the land and the social condition of owners and laborers. The monograph is in the nature of a partial report, which gives interesting information on conditions disclosed by the investigations, as yet unfinished. The work supplements the study of the same author, published in 1897, "Small Properties in France before the Revolution," and similar contributions by De Lisle.

The first of the seven chapters of the work is devoted to a very brief resumé of the relations between peasant and lord in the different countries of Europe, and to a consideration of the difference in ownership of land, together with the personal conditions due to these relations. The unequal distribution of land among peasant owners in different parishes of the same province and in different provinces, the development of peasant ownership during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and the increase of small properties by the division and sale of large estates, are discussed, by means of comparative statistics, in the second chapter. Then Professor Loutchisky shows how the changes in ownership of land affected the corvée as an incident in the personal relation between peasants and lords. In the feudal conditions obtaining when this

institution was established, it was neither unjust nor excessively burdensome. But under the changed condition of ownership and tenure of land, it became all the obnoxious burden that Turgot and contemporary writers pictured it.

At considerable length the author discusses and illustrates statistically the agricultural conditions which confronted the privileged classes, the influence of lack of capital for large and effective agricultural enterprises, the embarrassment which was inseparable from absentee ownership, the various forms and degrees of property rights into which the nobles came by inheritance, and the unsurmountable hindrances to progress in cultivation of lands. In these chapters, the picture of agricultural perplexities is painted clearly and strikingly. A chapter is devoted to a study of farming as conducted by managers of estates and by renters from hereditary owners. The different groups which composed the peasant class of the period, and the predominance of small farmers are traced in the effect they produced on social economic relations and conditions. The closing discussion of the book covers the situation existing when seigneurial rights were increasingly neglected and disregarded; when vast arrearages of all sorts were allowed to accumulate to the distraction of both creditors and debtors; when the inevitable reaction came and the insufficiency of revenue was sought to be repaired by increased rents and the recovery of lands.

The study is of value to the student of social and economic phenomena and to the historian who seeks to get into close touch with casual facts. The narrative is uncolored by any personal interpretation of facts by the writer, and the summary of comparative statistical results is well handled and illuminative.

ROBERT P. SHEPHERD.

#### NEW BOOKS

BAX, E. B. *The last episode of the French Revolution; being a history of Gracchus Babeuf and the conspiracy of the equals.* (Boston: Small, Maynard. Pp. 271. \$1.50.)

CHATTERTON, A. *Industrial evolution in India.* (Madras: The Hindu Office. Pp. 369. 3s.)

CLERGET, P. *Géographie économique. L'exploitation rationnelle du globe.* (Paris: O. Doin & Fils. 1912. Pp. 473, xii. 5 fr.)

To be reviewed.